

# Raccoons



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- The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) provides advice on urban wildlife issues, but does not provide nuisance raccoon control.
  - **DO NOT FEED RACCOONS!** Keep all pet food and water inside!
  - Keep garbage can lids secured.
  - Keep compost piles covered (never include bones or animal fat).
  - Do not feed feral cats.
  - Secure domestic birds in sturdy enclosures.
  - Seal holes in structures to eliminate potential shelter.
  - You may live trap and relocate raccoons without a permit. (Title 76).
  - For more information on hunting and trapping raccoons: [Hunting and Trapping Regulations](#)

## Biological Information

**Distribution:** across all of Louisiana, most of the US, Mexico, and southern Canada, excluding portions of the Rocky Mountains and the arid SW

**Habitat:** all habitats types in Louisiana, highest densities in marshes and swamps, dens in trees often 30-40 feet above the ground

**Appearance:** size of a medium dog, adults average 20 pounds, grayish to blackish in color, 5 -6 black and gray to yellowish rings on the tail (the tip of the tail is black), prominent black mask across the face bordered by white above and below the black

**Reproduction:** mating from early January to early April (occasionally as late as

August), gestation of 63 days, 4 per litter; newborns are 2 - 3 oz. and blind (eyes open at 2 weeks)

**Food habits:** omnivorous, relishing crayfish, crabs, snails, clams, small fish, frogs, earthworms, insects, fruits, berries, and shoots of trees

**Habits:** good swimmers and tree climbers; front paws are dexterous; they do not hibernate but store layers of fat during the fall to prepare for winter

**Controls:** prey to coyotes, bobcats, and cougars; juveniles prey to large owls, eagles, and fishers; prone to distemper, rabies, leptospirosis (which can be passed to humans); parasites include roundworms, flatworms, tapeworms, mites, lice and fleas



## Live Trapping Raccoons



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- Any pungent food items (canned cat food) serve as effective bait for raccoons.
- Trapped raccoons can become aggressive. Wear heavy gloves when handling the trap. Open the trap away from you and move away.
- Place the trap in a location where the trapped raccoon will not be disturbed by humans or domesticated animals.
- Check the trap frequently to avoid causing excessive stress to the animal.
- Raccoons are a known rabies vector species. If a bite occurs DO NOT release the animal. Contact the state public health veterinarian for information on testing.